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CHRISTMAS HEADQUARTERS

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APPROPRIATE PRESENTS

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And the Place to Buy Them--

KARSCH'S

Railway Hearing

As was announced in this paper last week, E. J. Bean, member of the State Board of Public Utilities, arrived in Farmington Tuesday, and, beginning at 1:30 p. m., spent the afternoon and evening in hearing complaints of citizens of this community in regard to what they considered inefficient service on the part of the electric line through Farmington. Edward A. Rozier appeared as attorney for the defense, while Jerry B. Burks and B. H. Marbury represented the plaintiffs.

A number of citizens testified to the inefficient service of the line, all of which tended very strongly to show a lack of accommodation of patrons of the line, both in the running of the cars as well as insufficient room, many of the cars being greatly overcrowded, when a single car was run, especially in the early morning, as well as in the evening, when the usual thing is that considerably more than 100 passengers were forced to crowd themselves into a single car from Farmington to Flat River, and returning. Unsanitary condition of cars was also shown.

The defense failed to present any witnesses in an attempt to refute the testimony offered by the Farmington citizens. The only line of defense they apparently have in mind is to show that their service is the best they can give for the revenues derived from the line. Commissioner Bean's stenographer took down all the evidence, which will be gone over by a full meeting of the Commissioners in Jefferson City at the earliest possible date, when their decision in the matter will be arrived at and their orders will be issued.

While here Commissioner Bean decided to give an informal hearing also to many complaints in regard to the poor service that is being given in this community by the Farmington and Lead Belt Telephone Co., and set 10 o'clock Wednesday morning for the hearing of such evidence. This hearing was necessarily informal, for the reason that the telephone Co. had not been given notice of such investigation. A representative gathering of business men were in attendance at this hearing, and much evidence was offered, all of which tended to show that the telephone service in this city was entirely inadequate for public needs; that the entire equipment was old and superannuated, and that acceptable service was impossible until better equipment was installed.

All those who demonstrated their interest in getting needed relief in these matters by being present at the hearings, feel that the citizens made out strong cases in support of their claims for better service, and that relief is now practically in sight for this community in regard to better car service as well as improvement in the telephone conditions that have been in existence for at least the past two years, and which has constantly been getting worse. Commissioner Bean will soon have an expert on the grounds to find out just what is necessary to improve the telephone system, and will then fix a date for a hearing, if necessary. Then the Commissioners will make such orders as they may deem necessary, and will see that they are complied with.

Relief is now near in regard to the proper regulation of these two public utilities, which have long been very largely a hindrance in Farmington, and the belief of those citizens who have rendered the assistance that was in their power to bring about the needed relief.

The Times is more than pleased with the interest that is being aroused by the suggestions that have been made through the columns of this paper, having for their aim the good and betterment of this community. In fact the management feels gratified with the very apparent interest that is being manifested, and if any additional motive were necessary to cause this paper to persist in this work, such interest furnishes the motive.

But in order to continue this work to the best possible advantage, it appears that there should be a thorough working organization perfected in this city, to take advance steps in all needed improvements and remedial work. Therefore, the thing that suggests itself along this line is a live, active, wide-awake, enthusiastic Commercial Club. It has long since been demonstrated that such an organization, organized with a purpose and determination of doing things, is the very best manner of doing real work for a community, better than any other plan that has yet been developed.

Of course, to get the best and greatest results, the membership of a Commercial Club should be comprised of live-wires. There is no place in such an organization for "dead ones." Such a membership should comprise every enterprising and progressive business man in the community—indeed there should be no other kind of business men in the community. The organization of live, wide-awake spirits naturally engenders renewed life and enthusiasm, so that such a club, properly organized, would from its very inception, be a positive tangible asset to this fair little city.

The Times is informed that there is now in existence in Farmington such a club, and while we have absolutely no desire to speak disparagingly of the club now in existence, we cannot believe that it has the proper organization, one that is calculated to get results. We cannot say wherein lies

Big Fire at Bonne Terre

Fire was discovered in the Brockenshire store building at Bonne Terre last Sunday morning, in the center store room occupied by Max Cohn with a stock of general merchandise. Another room was occupied by the Field-Lippman Piano Company, of which J. H. Radle had charge, and another by the Misses Brokenshire as a ladies' furnishings and fancy goods emporium. A large building owned by the Wells Mercantile Company—not the one in which that company does business—which was partly occupied as a store by the Wallace Store Co., caught fire, the roof dismantled and the ceiling of the upper story broken in. Some furniture of the Wells Mercantile Co. stored in the upper story and the stock of the Wallace Store Co. were badly damaged by water. Other buildings were damaged and plate glass windows across the street were broken by the heat.

The loss on buildings and goods is estimated in the neighborhood of \$25,000, and the insurance was small. On the Brockenshire building, the loss of which is between \$5,000 and \$6,000, there was no insurance. The Wells Mercantile building was damaged about \$3,500, with only \$1,000 insurance. The Field-Lippman Piano Co.'s loss was about \$1,500. Others who lost were Dr. T. A. Sons, who had offices in the Brockenshire building; Gordon building adjoining on east; Charles Ward grocer; W. H. Andrews, Quick Pay Old Line Life Insurance Co., and perhaps others.

Max Cohn, in whose store the fire was discovered, was quickly suspected of having started the fire, a warrant for his arrest was sworn out and he was brought to Farmington and lodged in jail to await the action of the Grand Jury, now in session, on a charge of arson.

ALMOST ELECTROCUTED

Elmer Lewis, freight brakeman, was almost electrocuted near the power house last Friday. In some way the side bars of the motor car steps became charged with electricity, and Lewis in stepping down from the car caught hold of the bars and was not able to pull loose. Motorman Wm. Shipp hastened to his assistance and managed to extricate him, but he was almost done for and both hands were badly burned. He was brought into town for treatment, and is now getting along all right, but he certainly had a narrow escape.

WORKING ORGANIZATION NEEDED IN FARMINGTON

The Best Method of Securing This is Through a Live, Wide-Awake, Enthusiastic Commercial Club

its frailties, as we know nothing about it. But we do know something of the possibilities of a thoroughly alive and active Commercial Club, especially in such a community as this, where there are so many things of tangible worth to back it up. In the first place, the office of the club secretary should be a salaried position, in order that the important duties devolving upon such officer must not be neglected. And there is hard work for such officer, if he performs, in the best possible way, the work that it is possible for him to do, in the upbuilding of the community. Here, we are informed, was one oversight of the present Commercial Club.

It now seems to be most timely for the organization of a new Commercial Club, on a bigger, broader scale than formerly, the sole purpose of which should be to work for the greater good and upbuilding of Farmington and St. Francois county. It would be impossible to enumerate the many things that could be accomplished within the next year, toward making a bigger and better Farmington, through perfect organization of a bunch of zealous and enthusiastic boosters. Nothing is impossible with such an organization. Shall we have it? Can we afford to do without it? There are many things already in sight that Farmington needs, and which can be secured with small effort. But they must have a guiding hand if they are to be secured. This is the best possible time to re-organize the Commercial Club, in order to start the New Year right. If this is done at once The Times is willing to wager its very existence that the harvest of good things for Farmington will be far more abundant during 1917 than ever before—even greater than was heretofore thought possible.

All that is necessary to bring about such splendid results, it appears to us, is some good man to start the ball rolling. Who will it be?

THE COUNTY IN DEBT

Between \$80,000 and \$90,000 Outstanding County Warrants Drawing Interest—What of the Future?

It is not generally known, and the information has just come to us, that St. Francois county is rather deeply in debt. There are now registered and outstanding between \$80,000 and \$90,000 in warrants issued by the present County Court. These warrants are drawing 6 per cent interest, and there is no available money in the County Treasury with which to pay them.

This means that that amount, if not more, of the entire revenue of the county has been anticipated. How much of this deficit, the taxes yet to be collected for 1916 may be able to liquidate is conjectural, but there is a probability that the incoming County Court may be badly handicapped in carrying on the business of the county for the next year. We suggest to the new court that perhaps there is a statute that directs them to go on with the 1917 business and pay for the same out of the current revenue, and at the close of the year, if there is any revenue left over, then this surplus or balance may be applied to the payment of the registered warrants then outstanding.

We do not know just how this \$80,000 or \$90,000 deficit has been expended, but we assume that every dollar's expenditure has been necessary, and we naturally conclude that our great and wealthy county has somehow failed to produce sufficient revenue with which to do the county's business. If not, then the County Board of Equalization (and the County Court judges are members of this board) should make provisions for raising a sufficient amount.

How may this be done? The great lead companies of this county will during the current year make in net profits \$20,000,000 (twenty million dollars). This is 10 per cent net profits on \$200,000,000, or 20 per cent on \$100,000,000. The lead corporations of this county own at least 75 per cent of the wealth of the county, and should pay 75 per cent of the taxes. If they are making a net profit of 20 per cent on \$100,000,000, would there be anything unreasonable in placing their assessment for taxing purposes at \$20,000,000? Every year they take their millions from the earth, and every million thus taken impoverishes the mineral value of the land that much. The net value is taken out of our county and State nev-

er to return. The day must inevitably come when this mineral supply will be exhausted—for no mine may be said to be inexhaustible—then how will it less our county?

Nature did not place these rich deposits in the earth for the exploitation and use of a few favored individuals; they belong to the aggregate wealth of the community that is built up about them, and that community is entitled to some of the benefits—lasting benefits that will remain when the underlying richness is expended and the surface is left a barren and practically useless waste.

This is no fantasy, no phantom of the imagination conjured up to frighten the timid. Has not this county had practical demonstration of the fact here but poorly pictured? When Iron Mountain lifted its wealth crowned head toward the skies, and men of practical minds and means took hold of it to turn its rich deposits into a stream of gold to their pockets, they talked of its inexhaustible resources. They had no interest in the future welfare and upbuilding of the county and community, but with pick and shovel and hydraulic hose spoiled it of its riches and carried them off, with never a thought of royalty to the county. Now it is a waste from which little revenue for the support of public needs may be derived. What splendid roads and public improvements could have been built, if properly expended, from the public revenue that might have been derived from it rightly assessed and taxed!

Shall we allow the opportunity offered us by the splendid lead resources of our county slip away without demanding of the companies, which are digging away and transporting their wealth to other States and cities, that royalty due this community, to be put into permanent public improvements that will be with us when these rich mineral holdings shall be but a cavern in the earth and a barren waste of chate and rocks?

J. C. Williams, E. E. Swink, Francis A. Benham, Jacob Day and Mode Coffman leave today for Reynolds county on a big hunt. They take with them as their man "Friday" to do the cooking Lewis Smith (colored). Lewis, it is said, will be the only colored person in Reynolds county.

Special Demonstration of GOSSARD CORSETS

IN OUR CORSET DEPARTMENT WE ARE DAILY GIVING DEMONSTRATIONS, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF MRS. H. W. PHILIPS OF THE H. W. GOSSARD CO. SHE WILL BE WITH US ON DEC. 15, 1916.

Not only can you obtain correct information regarding the new spring styles in corsets, but you can also obtain authentic information regarding suits, dresses, millinery, and lingerie during this demonstration.

There is a decided change in the figure line this season. The smaller waist is returning, but in a new form. It will be well for you to ascertain the latest fashion news regarding corsets. It can be had for the asking during this demonstration.

Henderson Store Co.

MUSICAL ENTERTAINERS

3rd Number Lyceum Course at the

Monarch Theatre

SATURDAY, DEC. 9, 1916,

8:30 P. M.

Admission—Adults 50c; Children 25c

A splendid attraction; Don't miss it!